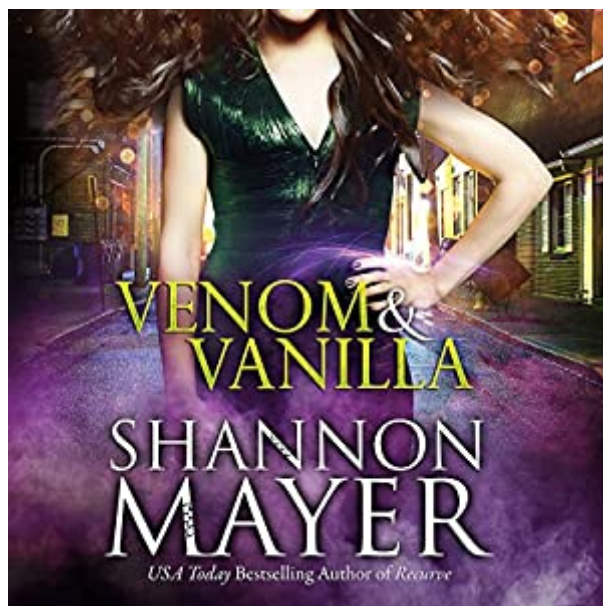


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Venom & Vanilla: The Venom Trilogy, Book 1



Synopsis

Successful Seattle baker Alena Budrene doesn't want to die. But when she's infected with a lethal virus spread by supernatural beings, her only chance for recovery is to make a deal with the devil - or in this case, a warlock. Though he saves her life, it looks nothing like the life she once knew - and neither does she. Alena is a new breed of "Supe" no one has ever seen before. Even the supernatural police don't know what she is. Now exiled to the northern side of the Wall, which marks the divide between humans and Supes, Alena is thrust into a dark and magical new world. But just as she begins to adjust to all things supernatural, she realizes that her transformation is the least of her worries - and it was no accident. She was chosen...to be killed by a Greek hero trying to make a name for himself once more. Alena was brought up to be subservient, preferring creating to fighting, and vanilla and honey to blood. But that was then. Now, to survive, she must stand up for herself - and this time she's got fangs. But will she be ready to use them?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Overall, did I have fun reading *Venom and Vanilla*? Yes. Does the book have some issues? Yes. The world development is minimal and doesn't really give the reader a lot of backstory. Perhaps this is something that will be developed as the trilogy progresses. The characters run the gamut from type, believably, and development. I liked the characters overall, but you don't get much beyond the surface of any character. I honestly cringed when the Greek gods were introduced. Not what I expected, or really wanted. I will let it go and see where the author takes us, but I am leery of how it

will play out. There is humor and action in the story, but the telling is somewhat hectic and disjointed at points. Anyone picking up the book should be prepared that there is a lot left unexplained and undone by the end.

I have tried to read another series by this author before and I didn't take too well to it, but this one was a lot easier to get into. I wasn't sure when I picked it up, but I gave it a chance and I'm glad I did. The story was inventive and when it really got going, I didn't want to put it down. I just hope the others are as engaging and answer some of the questions that this one started but didn't answer. What do I like about it? The main character was trying to fit into a mold that sometimes she would escape in her job. When she was given her new life, she started out as she had before, but started to realize that she could change. She found that she was a tough cookie. I didn't care for how the one religion was portrayed. It sounded to me like an extreme Christian group that tolerates no one. I know that this is fiction, but fiction can reflect reality and that is something that can pain a person. I do hope that if there is more interaction with Christian like groups on her series, the author realizes that while Christians in real life don't tolerate certain practices, we do embrace the people.

To be honest this just wasn't my style, had I read a preview page or two I would never have actually read the book. I did read the entire thing, and towards the end it stopped bothering me as much, but not enough to read any follow up books that may associate with it. The main character is a super conservative female who can't swear, and yet wants to, a lot. I don't find the need to have swearing, but you can leave out the childish pre-teen cover versions: oh poo, frickety frackety (or some crap like that), h e double l, and many others take the book and really ruin it for me. The cover photo makes me feel like this is advertised more towards adults, the writing more tween. The story itself was not terrible, I did want to see how it finished.

It's a decent read if you are looking for something light-hearted and tinged with humor. I read it in an afternoon, which means the book is simply too short for the price and thus I can't justify picking up the rest of the series. If the price were more in line with the length of the story the value would be good, but at \$4.99 it is a rip-off. The character background and development is lacking, and knowing that the author has published other books leads me to believe that character development is possibly a writing weakness of hers. I hope that isn't the case, but honestly I feel that by the time an author is into their third or fourth series of books they should have character development figured out.

As annoying as I found the heroic villainess at the beginning, she grew on me quickly enough that I was hooked before she stopped dying. The world-building is sophomoric at times, but by the time you detect the inconsistencies and goofiness, you'll be rooting for her enough to look the other way. Yet another interpretation of tired old Greek gods and monsters? Yet another hapless human railroaded by supernaturals into a misunderstood Faustian bargain? So what. I'm rooting for the monstress because Odysseus and his ilk are a bunch of [CENSORED], because Shannon said so. I also enjoy malted milk balls (a.k.a. Whoppers) from time to time. You know you will, too.

I'm sorry, this was just plain silly from the get go and didn't get any better. I actually read the entire thing to see if it would improve but it was awful. Case in point, the Greek god Zeus is a store manager at what seems to be described as a store on a lower scale than Walmart - complete with weird people (like the 'Walmartians' that are immortalized on the internet) wandering around it. The heroine is super religious and cannot bring herself to swear so goes around calling people things like 'A donkey's rear end' and seems to be given so much of a wide-eyed innocent character that she is freaked out about going on a motor cycle because God wouldn't approve and describes the kick-stand as the 'kick-thingy'. Ugh. Just plain awful and ridiculous. I wish I had picked another book for my freebie, because even being free this seemed like a waste.

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